

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Inquiry Concerning the Deployment)	
Of Advanced Telecommunications)	
Capability to All Americans in a)	
Reasonable and Timely Fashion And,)	CC Docket No. 98-146
Possible Steps to Accelerate Such)	
Deployment Pursuant to Section 706)	
of the Telecommunications Act of 1996)	

**THIRD NOTICE OF INQUIRY
REPLY COMMENTS OF
THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES**

October 9, 2001

Summary

The National Association of Community Action Agencies (NACAA) supports the comments submitted by the Alliance for Public Technology and Intel Corporation on the state of deployment of advanced telecommunications services and the Federal Communications Commission's role in implementation of Section 706 of the 1996 Telecommunications Act.

NACAA serves as a national forum for policy on poverty and to strengthen, promote, represent and serve its network of member agencies to assure that the issues of the poor are effectively heard and addressed. NACAA advances the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, health and civil rights of low-income Americans through community-based programs operating at more than 900 Community

Action Agencies (CAAs) nationwide. It is NACAA's mission to ensure that low-income Americans are not left behind. First established in 1964 to fight America's War on Poverty as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Economic Opportunity Act, CAAs improve 10 million lives every year and make America a better place to live. Community Action employees, 125,000 strong, are located in virtually every county in the nation to deliver poverty-fighting initiatives like Head Start, WIC, food banks, job placement and training, first-time-home buyer programs; and, alternative education for at-risk youth. CAAs have a proven track record of helping people help themselves and each other.

The issue in this proceeding goes beyond that of increased speed for telecommunications services. The issue also encompasses life-enhancing applications of technology that have the potential to play an important role in changing lives. Specifically, advanced services can play a pivotal role in bringing a multifaceted approach to bridging the digital divide, such as, promoting economic self-sufficiency for millions of Americans, creating opportunities for jobs and economic advancement, and making government more responsive to all citizens. In order for millions of Americans to attain self-sufficiency in the currently emerging digital divide society, access to technology is needed.

It is imperative for every sector of our nation to have affordable and useable access to advanced telecommunications services, including low-income and rural populations. As Commissioner Martin highlighted in his Separate Statement accompanying the release of the Commission's Notice of Inquiry:

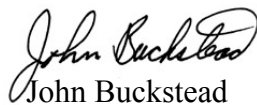
Advanced Services are particularly important to rural communities. High speed data connections enable people in remote parts of the country to have access to the educational materials of large universities, the healthcare resources of our best

hospitals, and business opportunities all over the world...We must ensure that this growth in access [in rural communities] continues and fulfills Congress' mandate to encourage deployment of advanced services to "all Americans."¹

NACAA strongly urges the Commission to consider the impact of Section 706. It is clear that our nation needs a strong federal commitment to the advanced universal service goals of the '96 Act. It is especially clear that the FCC must use its full authority under Section 706 to eliminate barriers and create incentives for the industry's rapid deployment of advanced services that will bring life altering technologies to low-income and rural Americans.

Low-income and rural communities require policies that address their needs. NACAA urges that, as technology advances, the Commission work diligently to ensure that those who most need advanced services are not left out. The Commission must adopt policies that require the telecommunications industry to work with community-based organizations to provide advanced services in all communities that have been left out. NACAA, again, expresses that we agree with comments submitted by the Alliance for Public Technology and the Intel Corporation in addressing this very important issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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¹ Separate Statement of Commissioner Martin.